



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/646,404	08/22/2003	Robert Russell	Knape & Vogt P86US	9505
7590 03/23/2005 VARNUM, RIDDERING, SCHMIDT & HOWLETT LLP P.O. BOX 352 GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49501			EXAMINER LEV, BRUCE ALLEN	
			ART UNIT 3634	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 03/23/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/646,404

Applicant(s)

RUSSELL ET AL.

Examiner

Bruce A. Lev

Art Unit

3634

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 August 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-29 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-29 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 22 August 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2/27/04.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

BRUCE A. LEV
PRIMARY EXAMINER

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

Claims 1-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

As concerns claims 1, 13, and 29, the phrase "Lazy Susan-like" is vague and indefinite.

As concerns claims 1, 4, 9, 11, and 29, it is not clear as to whether the "system" is being claimed alone or if the "system" is being claimed in ***combination*** with the "article". The preamble sets forth just the "system", however, in claim 1, line 3, the "system" is set forth as being "removably coupled to said article", and line 4, "and...above the shelf"; in claim 4, "adjacent the support"; claim 9, "along said shelf"; claim 11, "engage lips located along the perimeter of said shelf";

As concerns claims 14 and 29, the "means" phrases are not properly defined, i.e., "lid means" should be just "a lid"; and "spout means" should be just "a spout".

As concerns claim 22, the phrase "said flap seal" lacks antecedent basis and is therefore vague and indefinite.

As concerns claim 24, the phrase "said spout hinge" lacks antecedent basis and is therefore vague and indefinite.

As concerns claims 26, 28, and 29, the phrase "said storage container" lacks antecedent basis and is therefore vague and indefinite.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. ***102(b)*** as being anticipated by ***Haumann et al 3,163,994***.

Haumann et al set forth a system comprising segregating means as fins projecting radially, mounted in place, and including web portions; a plurality of sector shaped container 105 and 116 fitting between the segregating means and having means for storage, handle means, lid means, and spout means. The applicant should note that since several of the limitations are in "means" form, equivalent structures by the reference set forth above that perform the same function can be considered as equivalent to structure disclosed by the applicant. Also, limitations implying that members are formed as two separate members connected together (as one) are not considered as having patentable weight within an apparatus claim.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Bruce A. Lev whose telephone number is (571) 272-6831. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri., 5:30 AM - 2:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

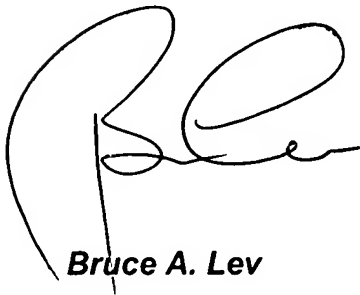
supervisor, Lanna Mai can be reached on (571) 272-6867.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system.

Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pairedirect.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

March 17, 2005

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruce A. Lev', with a large, stylized initial 'B'.

Bruce A. Lev

Primary Examiner

Group 3634